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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 4, 2024

Bojana Zoric Martinez  
Director  
Bureau of Refugee Programs  
635 North 26th Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53233

Dear Ms. Martinez,

Over the last several months, many constituents have contacted me to express concerns about refugee resettlement initiatives in Wisconsin – and about a disturbing lack of transparency surrounding those resettlement efforts.

As you know, federal law requires coordination with affected stakeholders regarding resettlement of refugees within a State or locality. Unfortunately, such coordination in this instance has been opaque at best. As a result, many Wisconsin residents feel that they have had no say in state and federal plans to place foreign nationals in their communities. They believe that your refugee resettlement plans are simply a foregone conclusion.

Along those lines, it would be helpful for you, as the State official responsible for refugee resettlement, to host a public forum or a series of public forums in Chippewa County – and the surrounding areas – to present additional information about resettlement strategies, provide an opportunity for public comment, and answer questions. I hope you will also consider holding similar events in other Wisconsin communities that are being considered as potential resettlement sites.

State and local officials received little advance notice about plans to house thousands of Afghan evacuees at Fort McCoy in 2021. Thanks to the lax vetting policies of the Biden administration, several Afghans with prior criminal histories, or who had been previously deported, were allowed to enter the United States. After their arrival, some Afghans went on to commit additional serious crimes ranging from domestic violence to sexual abuse of a minor.

Not surprisingly, many Wisconsinites are not convinced that the Biden Administration's approach to screening and vetting will be any more rigorous when it comes to broader refugee resettlement plans here in our state. They are also concerned about the short-term and long-term strain that refugee resettlement will impose on local school systems and housing costs and

availability when classrooms are already overcrowded, and housing is at a premium. One Eau Claire Housing Authority official has already contacted me to echo this latter concern. Local citizens are also worried about strains on access to public health services and other social safety net programs on which many vulnerable members of the community rely.

In the wake of the community's experience with Afghan evacuees, some Wisconsinites have also raised questions about the ability of new arrivals to adapt to basic American social norms and values, and about how state and local officials plan to address this very real challenge. After all, we have already seen sometimes violent clashes brought about by large-scale foreign national "resettlements" in Europe, and more recently in large urban areas across the United States. Understandably, Wisconsinites do not want to see this same scenario play out in our communities.

In short, the public has a right to know why the Chippewa Valley is targeted for refugee resettlement, how the increased burden on taxpayers will be addressed, and how an influx of foreign newcomers will impact their friends and neighbors who are already struggling to make ends meet. People across the state also deserve to know if their city is next.

I hope you will consider taking steps to expand the public dialogue on this important issue in order to ensure that Wisconsinites have the final word on what happens in their towns.

Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas P. Tiffany". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Tom Tiffany  
Member of Congress

CC: Chair of Chippewa County Board Dean Gullickson